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UNCLAS MADRID 001104

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SENSITIVE

DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/WE AND IO

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [SP](#) [UNDP](#)

SUBJECT: EU PARLIAMENTARIAN SALAFRANCA ON UNDP CANDIDACY

1. (SBU) Spanish EU Parliamentarian for the Popular Party (PP) Jose Ignacio Salafranca visited Charge on March 18 to solicit USG support for his bid to replace Malloch Brown as UNDP director. Salafranca said he wanted to clarify to the USG that although he had the support of the Spanish Government, he was not the Socialist government's candidate. According to Salafranca, his name was first put forward by high-level friends in the EU and UN systems (including Javier Ruperez, Executive Director of the UN's Counter-Terrorism Secretariat) and he only approached the GOS for support after

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having gained the backing of EU Commission President Durao Barroso and the French government. Salafranca then went to Spanish Foreign Minister Moratinos in early March to request that the Spanish MFA indicate its support for his candidacy (despite the fact that he represents the opposition PP) via a note verbale circulated to the diplomatic community in Madrid. Moratinos agreed to do so, which Salafranca said led to an internal dispute within the ruling Socialist Party (PSOE), many of whose members resented the government's backing of a PP candidate to an important UN position. This internal PSOE debate delayed the release of the note verbale supporting Salafranca's candidacy by over two weeks, but the note was eventually circulated in Madrid (copy of diplomatic note was faxed to EUR/WE on March 21 along with a letter from Salafranca requesting USG support for his candidacy.)

2. (SBU) Salafranca said that although the UNDP director is appointed by the UNSYG and not elected by UN members, he understood that the USG's view would have great bearing on UNSYG Annan's decision. He wanted to request the USG's support, or at least head off USG hostility to his candidacy just because it had been sanctioned by the Zapatero government. He asked whether the USG had given its backing to the UK candidate or any other nominee. Charge explained that the USG had taken no position on any of the UNDP candidates. Salafranca said he had the support of several Latin American countries (Chile, Mexico, Panama, Ecuador, Peru, Guatemala, and Costa Rica) and several North African countries (Algeria, Turkey, Tunisia). He implied that high-level figures such as Durao Barroso and former Spanish President Jose Maria Aznar may contact the USG to lobby on his behalf.

3. (SBU) Salafranca approached USINT Havana and USEU on his candidacy before visiting Embassy Madrid, evidently because of his frequent interaction/cooperation with the USG in Brussels on Cuba issues. He thought that USINT and USEU would be better placed than Embassy Madrid to relay his bona fides to Washington since after nearly 15 years in Brussels he had few dealings with USG officials in Madrid.

MANZANARES